

Of Pride and Honor

by The Sunny Side of FanFiction

Category: Warriors

Genre: Adventure, Friendship

Language: English

Characters: OC

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2016-04-10 19:50:17

Updated: 2016-04-15 03:21:26

Packaged: 2016-04-27 19:22:50

Rating: T

Chapters: 2

Words: 4,849

Publisher: [www.fanfiction.net](http://www.fanfiction.net)

Summary: Those ripped from their life and placed in another can tell the difference between what is right and just, and what is done with clouded judgment. They are prisoners of war, forced to give up their beliefs to please those who have imprisoned them. But they still have comrades, and they all share one thing that they refuse to give up: hope. Rated T.

## 1. PROLOGUE & ALLEGIANCES

**\*\*Well, I suppose now is not a good time to be posting another story when I have one already in the works, but I just couldn't let this idea go to waste, so here it is.\*\***

**\_\*\*Story Summary Credit goes to my dearest friend, Tricals. 3 (heart eng) XD\*\*\_**

**\*\*Extended Summary (Sunny):\*\***

**\_\*\*An attack by the four Clans left the Tribe of Rushing Water essentially extinct. Their leader was ripped to shreds before their very eyes, their deputy and medicine cat being thrown off of the stone ledge just outside their camp. Kits were slaughtered; apprentices were beaten; warriors were torn apart limb by limb. The horrors that occurred haunt the eight cats, torn from their families and rid of their former life in the mountains, that now reside as prisoners of war inside the four Clans. Though their faith is stripped from their mind, their hope isn't " and with the help of a few unlikely comrades, they might just get to keep the hope they've been fighting for.\*\*\_**

**\*\*\*\*SIDE NOTE: THE WARRIORS FOR THE TRIBE WILL GAIN WARRIOR NAMES ONCE IN THE CLANS.\*\*\*\***

**\*\*Not the most kind-hearted story in existence, but there will be some fond moments between our characters.\*\***

\*\*I actually have quite an amount of ideas for this, so this might become more of a priority than \*\*\*\*\_Progression\_\*\*\*\* as of late. I'm not entirely sure of that, though; with new ideas comes faster updates, certainly, but with those fast updates comes the lack of context and overall greatness of a chapter. I'll be writing for both this story and for \*\*\*\*\_Progression\_\*\*\*\*, but I suppose that updates will occur on either story â€" depending on how much time I have on my hands, anyway, as well as ideas and whatnot.\*\*

\*\*Okay, enough with this AN. It's much too long!\*\*

\*\*Please enjoy, read and review!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Of Pride and Honor<strong>

\*\*Prologue\*\*

Sometimes, Stoneteller couldn't tell if the nightmares â€" ones of blood, death, and sacrifice â€" were just in his head. Some of them seemed much too real.

As the dark gray tom sat outside his part of the large cave, grooming his long tabby pelt, the memories to some of his worst nightmares trickled into his mind. He would see his cats, so helpless and fragile looking opposed to the fierce enemy forboding them, trying to fight their way through the crowd after crowd of tooth and claw. Each time, he would try and call out to them â€" to give them some encouragement as he had always done â€" but no one seemed to hear it.

And each time, he watched as they all died before him.

And each time, he too would die â€" not at the claws of the enemy, but of the jagged stones that sunk into every inch of his body and eventually his neck as he was thrown off the stone ledge just before their cave.

He often woke in a trembling mess, with unease burning his pelt and anxiety warming his paws. The itch to protect his cats was there; it had always been, really, but now it came stronger than it ever had.

"Stoneteller?"

The dark gray tom shook his head, causing the memories to fade to the back of his mind. He raised his head, settling his eyes on the pale form of Rising Sky. The pale tom was staring at him intently, his dark eyes questioning.

"What is it?" Stoneteller grunted, trying to seem disinterested.

"Mountain Peak's been asking for you for some time now," Rising Sky meowed, twitching his ears. "The old tom's been complaining of an aching back."

Stoneteller meowed a quick thanks before rising to his paws and going

into his den in search of the correct herbs. After a few moments of nosing through them, he caught the scent of huckleberry and thyme. Stoneteller wrapped the two in a bundle of moss and retreated from his den. As he made his way to the elder's cave, Rising Sky at his side, the dark tom suddenly felt his body freeze and time slow to a dull thrum in his ears.

The entire cave was blanketed in a thick darkness, almost like a black fog. Stoneteller could barely see three pawsteps in front of him, much less where he was placing his own paws. He squinted against the blackness, trying to see even the smallest shaft of light throughout the cave; no such light came to greet him.

Whispers came from all directions, flooding into Stoneteller's ears. The tom recoiled back against a small shallow of rocks, his breath quickening as the voices began to take forms of cats â€" his cats â€" around him. Their pelts â€" darks, blacks, whites, creams and an assortment of others â€" were drenched in a thick, reeking liquid, and it took Stoneteller a moment to realize that it was blood.

One cat in particular â€" Scorching Breeze, he recognized â€" stepped through the sea of darkened fog and came muzzle-to-muzzle with Stoneteller. The dark gray she-cat lightly caressed Stoneteller's cheek with her tail-tip, sending electricity through the Healer's body.

\_What is this? \_Stoneteller's mind screamed, but even as he opened his mouth to voice the thought, no words came. \_Why is the Tribe of Endless Hunting showing me this?\_

Scorching Breeze suddenly purred, her eyes â€" her beautiful amber eyes â€" melting into her skull. A dark, ominous black settled in the amber's place, and Scorching Breeze lightly touched her nose to his in a loving way. But as she spoke, the voice that left her lungs was not the soft and quiet mew of the dark gray she-cat Stoneteller knew.

\_"This is the end of the Tribe; the Clans are taking over. What you once were â€" what the Tribe once was â€" is nothing to pay mind to. Some were born a legend â€" and some will die a legend.\_"

"Stoneteller?" Rising Sky's voice drifted into his thoughts, causing the dark images and dark hue to his gaze to melt away, as if it were never there. "Are you all right?"

Swallowing, Stoneteller hurriedly passed the leaf bundle to Rising Sky, muttering an "I'm fine" before racing back to his den. The peaceful quiet of the shallow cave did not calm his nerves; in fact, it only increased them.

He settled down near the small pool of water just on the edge of the cavern, staring harshly into the clouded liquid. His eyes were dull, his fur clumped and unkept, as if he hadn't spent the morning grooming it. His breaths were light and raspy, his heart clamoring in his chest as he stared down at the reflection of a cat he didn't seem to recognize as himself.

\_It was just a nightmare... \_he told himself, raising a shaky paw to dab at the water. He rushed his wet pad over his whiskers, smoothing

them down and making them look presentable. \_That's all it was.\_

As Stoneteller soon came to know, it was \_much\_ more than just a nightmare.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>ALLEGIANCES<strong>

\*\*THUNDERCLAN\*\*

LEADER: Birchstar â€" light brown tabby tom with white underbelly and paws, amber eyes

DEPUTY: Thistleheart â€" dark gray-and-white she-cat, green eyes

MEDICINE CAT: Auburnfur â€" dark reddish-brown tom, blue eyes

WARRIORS:

Snowheart â€" white she-cat, green eyes

Hawkblaze â€" dark gray tabby tom, amber eyes

Nightwing â€" black she-cat, amber eyes

Paleclaw â€" off-white tabby tom, blue eyes

Newtfeather â€" pale ginger she-cat with dark ginger flecks, green eyes

Blizzardtalon â€" black-and-white tom, blue eyes

Oakclaw â€" light brown tabby tom, amber eyes

Swiftfoot â€" dark golden tom, green eyes

Dawnfire â€" light cream she-cat, blue eyes

APPRENTICES:

Larkpaw â€" small dark gray tabby tom, green eyes

Stoatpaw â€" brown-and-white tom, amber eyes

Tansypaw â€" light golden she-cat, blue eyes

QUEENS:

Poppyheart â€" pale ginger she-cat with cream dapples and paws, amber eyes (expecting Paleclaw's kits)

Featherwind â€" pale gray tabby she-cat, green eyes (Hawkblaze's mate)

ELDERS:

Smallfire â€" dark brown she-cat, blue eyes

Fireflight â€" ginger she-cat, amber eyes

TRIBE CAPTIVES:

Birdtalon â€" pale brown tom, green eyes

Lakeflight â€" pale blue-gray she-cat, green eyes

\*\*SHADOWCLAN\*\*

LEADER: Adderstar â€" thick brown tabby tom, yellow eyes

DEPUTY: Quailnose â€" black-and-white tom, blue eyes

MEDICINE CAT: Hollyfern â€" black she-cat, green eyes

WARRIORS:

Redclaw â€" dark reddish-brown tom, yellow eyes

Mottlefur â€" mottled light brown she-cat, amber eyes

Smokepelt â€" dark gray she-cat, green eyes

Tigerblaze â€" dark brown tom, amber eyes

Bluefeather â€" blue-gray tom, blue eyes

Shadowsong â€" black she-cat, yellow eyes

Blackstripe â€" white she-cat with black stripe down back, blue eyes

Elmflight â€" light brown she-cat, amber eyes

APPRENTICES:

Patchpaw â€" black-and-white she-cat, green eyes

Nightpaw â€" black she-cat, amber eyes

Forestpaw â€" light brown tom, blue eyes

QUEENS:

Ravenheart â€" black she-cat with white underbelly, yellow eyes  
(Tigerblaze's mate)

ELDERS:

Sagewing â€" blue-gray-and-white she-cat, amber eyes

Coalfang â€" black tom, green eyes

Foxface â€" dark ginger she-cat with long-look muzzle, green eyes

TRIBE CAPTIVES:

Mapleheart â€" reddish-brown tabby she-cat, green eyes

Owlmask â€" dark brown tom, amber eyes

**\*\*RIVERCLAN\*\***

LEADER: Scalestar â€" tortoiseshell she-cat, amber eyes

DEPUTY: Mintflower â€" pale gray she-cat, green eyes

MEDICINE CAT: Willowsong â€" dark gray she-cat, blue eyes

WARRIORS:

Salmonstreak â€" black she-cat with bright pink nose, green eyes

Flurryheart â€" white she-cat, amber eyes

Graymask â€" white tom with gray facemask, blue eyes

Icefeather â€" white tom, blue eyes

Fishleap â€" dark gray tom, amber eyes

Wetnose â€" pale gray she-cat with white paws, green eyes

Whitesplash â€" dark gray she-cat with white splash just above nose, blue eyes

APPRENTICES:

Fogpaw â€" light gray tom, blue eyes

Beechpaw â€" white-and-gray she-cat, amber eyes

ELDERS:

Splashfern â€" black-and-white she-cat, green eyes

Riverheart â€" blue-gray tom, amber eyes

Mintberry â€" pale gray she-cat, blue eyes

TRIBE CAPTIVES:

Skyblaze â€" pale gray tom, amber eyes

Marshstep â€" calico she-cat, green eyes

**\*\*WINDCLAN\*\***

LEADER: Fallowstar â€" black she-cat, blue eyes

DEPUTY: Finchclaw â€" light brown tom, green eyes

MEDICINE CAT: Falconheart â€" brown-and-white tom, amber eyes

#### WARRIORS:

Sheepfur â€" fluffy white tom, blue eyes

Weaselflight â€" pale ginger she-cat, amber eyes

Molefang â€" brown-and-white tom, green eyes

Thymenose â€" light brown she-cat, green eyes

Spiderstream â€" black she-cat, amber eyes

Pansytail â€" light cream she-cat, blue eyes

Wasppelt â€" pale ginger tom, green eyes

Ivyfur â€" silver tabby she-cat, green eyes

Rooknose â€" dark brown tom, amber eyes

Hareleap â€" silver-and-white tom, blue eyes

#### APPRENTICES:

Gingerpaw â€" pale ginger she-cat, amber eyes

Fawnpaw â€" light brown she-cat, green eyes

#### QUEENS:

Ashennose â€" pale silver she-cat with darker flecks, amber eyes  
(Sheepfur's mate)

Pipitfur â€" dark brown she-cat with lighter paws, blue eyes  
(Molefang's mate)

#### ELDERS:

Shrikefoot â€" pale silver tom, green eyes

Cloudflower â€" white she-cat, green eyes

#### TRIBE CAPTIVES:

Pheasantleaf â€" pale gray she-cat with white muzzle, underbelly and paws, amber eyes

Antstep â€" dark reddish-brown she-cat, blue eyes

## 2. Chapter One: Skyblaze

\*\*Welcome to the first chapter of OPAH! Thank you to everyone who followed and favorited. It's because of you that I got working on this chapter straight away after posting the prologue. (:\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Of Pride and Honor<strong>

**\*\*Chapter 1\*\***

\_Two moons.\_

\_Two moons have passed since the attack on the Tribe. Two moons have passed since I, along with seven other Tribe cats, were spared of being killed. Two moons have passed since I, along with those other seven, were taken into Clan custody and divided amongst them in pairs. \_

\_Two moons have passed since I lost it all. My home; my mate; my kits. Everything, just torn apart in front of my very eyes. \_

\_Now I'm here, in a place that's exactly as horrid as it was once described.\_

\* \* \*

><p>There wasn't a doubt in the pale gray tom's mind that this place â€" this <em>Clan<em> â€" was going to be the death of him.

He knew nothing of water, let alone \_hunting \_in it. He knew nothing of the ways of their Clan â€" not that any of them would share their customs with him or Marshstep anyway. He knew only what the leaders and deputies told him and the others as they were before them two moons ago, when they were being split up between the leaders.

\_"You two," ordered a dark brown tabby tom, staring at Owl's Cry and Maple Leaf, "You're coming to ShadowClan. Your dark pelts will work well in the thick shelter of our home."\_

\_A light brown tabby tom, his tail raised high, looked at Bird's Claw and Clear Water. "You'll join me in ThunderClan," he meowed briskly, twitching his ears. "My Clan will welcome you swiftly."\_

\_A black she-cat â€" her pelt slight raised along her spine â€" blinked at Autumn Leaf and Shaded Willow. "WindClan could use your long legs," she meowed, though only looked to Shaded Willow when she spoke. She did not glance at Autumn Leaf, whose shorter stature would make it difficult for her in a Clan of clearly swift cats. "You'll come with me."\_

\_This left three; two Tribals and one leader. The leader â€" a skinny, sleek tortoiseshell she-cat â€" looked evenly at him and at Blooming Flower beside him. "Rising Sky and Blooming Flower," she purred silkily, and Blooming Flower hissed menacingly with her hackles raised. Rising Sky felt a chill run down his spine as he looked into the tortoiseshell's amber eyes, who did not move her gaze from either of them despite Blooming Flower's threat. "You'll be accompanying me to RiverClan."\_

\_"We leave now," the ShadowClan and ThunderClan leader said in unison. They began to turn in the direction of their separate camps, but not before Autumn Leaf, the sensitive she-cat that she was, called for her sister.\_

\_"Maple Leaf!" she cried, rushing forward and nuzzling the



reddish-brown tabby's chest. Her sister simply stood there, her eyes glowing with tears yet holding them back with a shocking amount of willpower. Rising Sky watched as the ShadowClan leader snarled for them to back away, and it took Shaded Willow to be the one interfering to get poor Autumn Leaf " now a sobbing, sniffing mess " back to her place beside WindClan's leader. \_

\_The two female leaders allowed the four still in the clearing to say their goodbyes. Rising Sky watched as Shaded Willow, Blooming Flower, and Autumn Leaf brushed against each other like old friends. It made him sick, his gut twisting and coiling into a knot that wouldn't undo itself. \_

\_"Don't you want to say goodbye?"\_

\_Rising Sky stiffened at the soft murmur of the RiverClan leader at his side. He glared down at her, taking in her small size, but not missing the clear pointed and sharp tongue she had on her. \_

\_"No," he meowed gruffly, turning his attention back to the purring mass of she-cat's in front of him, "I'd much rather not."\_

\_"Why?" the tortoiseshell pressed, lashing her tail, "Aren't they your family?"\_

\_Rising Sky hissed under his breath, turning his irritated gaze on her. His hackles rose for only a moment before he flattened them and calmed his breathing as much as he could. He turned away from her, glaring at his unsheathed claws that dug into the dirt. \_

\_"I don't have a family," he meowed briskly, shutting his eyes tightly to keep the emotions from letting his grip on reality fall. "Not anymore."\_

It was two moons ago, yes. But it still felt like yesterday to him.

A sharp nudge suddenly caught Skyblaze off guard. Looking to his right, he saw a RiverClan cat glaring down at him from where he lay in his nest. The pale gray she-cat's pelt was spiked along her spine, and her eyes were daggers cutting into his skull.

"Get up, frog-brain!" she growled, prodding him again with an unsheathed claw. "You've been snoring so loud I can barely think!"

Marshstep, who slept just to the right of Skyblaze, yawned and raised her head from her paws. "What's going on?" she meowed, blinking rapidly against the harsh light.

The pale gray she-cat sighed. "Good," she purred, satisfied. "I was just about to wake you, too." she glared down at Skyblaze once more but said nothing to him. Instead, she turned her back on him and started towards the entrance of the poorly-packed den.

"Up and at 'em, kitties!" she sneered over her shoulder, "The day's still bright, and you've still got prey to catch!"

Once the she-cat was out of sight, Marshstep scraped her claws against her nest. "That blasted she-cat," she growled lowly, lashing

her tail. "The blasted lot of them, really! Who do they think they are?"

Skyblaze did nothing to respond. Instead, he twisted his head and began washing the ruffled fur on his side. "You know," he finally meowed between licks, "they're never going to warm up to us."

"Good!" Marshstep meowed, rising to her paws and stretching. "I'll never warm up to them so long as I'm in this heap!"

Skyblaze sighed in agreement. It seemed that the days in RiverClan seemed to get harder, not easier. Maybe it was because no cat could look at him or at Marshstep without throwing some sort of insult their way, or maybe the fact that he sometimes would find that his nest had completely been stripped of the moss covering the dirt floor and instead replaced with soaking wet moss, which in turn made Marshstep infuriated from her soaked pelt. Either way, his life here was not one of luxury.

"Come on," Marshstep sighed, twitching her ears as she nudged him with a paw. Thankfully, her claws were sheathed. "Let's get today over with."

\_Only to go through the same thing tomorrow, \_Skyblaze thought sullenly. The pale gray tom rose to his paws and lapped at his chest for another quick heartbeat before stepping, begrudgingly, out of the comfort of his nest. His paws felt oddly hard against the sandy ground that was beneath them, and with each step, his limbs felt like they were made of ice.

"Quit walking like an elder," Marshstep hissed from behind him. "Otherwise, that'll be another name added to your list!"

Skyblaze sniffed heatedly as he pushed his way out into the sunlight, Marshstep following closely. He took a deep breath, shutting his eyes in content as the sunlight beamed down on him from above and the crisp smell of Time of Freed Water wafted into his nose.

From within the confines of camp, RiverClan's land wasn't all that bad in terms of peacefulness. A light stream bed ran into the lake just a little ways out of camp, over by WindClan's moor; the sound of the running water could be heard all day and night. The reeds and the cattails just over by the nursery were where Skyblaze most often saw kits "adventurous and timid alike" playing and shoving one another into the shallow waterbed below.

By now the sun had just risen above the shallow expanse of trees inside of RiverClan's territory, and warriors were still pushing their way out of their dens. It was only a select few, however, most notably two apprentices. The pair shook out their fur and padded their separate ways, Skyblaze keeping his eye on the smaller of the two "a light gray tom. As the tom padded forward to greet another cat, that said cat "their mentor, Skyblaze guessed "cuffed them harshly over the ear and whisper something to them. The apprentice quickly threw a look at Skyblaze, turning back once he had noticed that the Tribe cat had caught him staring.

"I swear," Marshstep huffed in annoyance beside him, "These cats don't know how to keep their eyes to themselves." Skyblaze stole a

look at the calico warrior, noticing how her eyes were narrowed to slits and her tail was lashing from side to side. He followed her gaze over to the area between the warrior's den and the entrance of camp, where a few toms sat in the sunlight, their eyes casting over in their direction.

"Don't start anything," Skyblaze warned lowly, flashing a glare at Marshstep.

Instead of listening to him, Marshstep decided to do the complete opposite. "Hey!" she hollered to the toms, who snickered and nudged one another playfully. "What are you staring at?"

A lithe white tom rose to his paws, waving his tail. "What does it matter to you?" he meowed, tipping his head to the side in mockery. "Does the little she-cat not like us looking her way?" added a dark gray tom.

Suddenly, a pelt emerged from the top of a large set of rocks at the very edge of camp. The pale cat, whose eyes dismissed their own warriors and instead settled straight on Skyblaze and Marshstep, cocked its head to the side and twitched its ears. Sensing that it would eventually demand to know what was going on, Skyblaze quickly stepped in front of Marshstep, noticing her beginning to crouch low to the ground.

"Calm down," he hissed, jerking his head subtly to the side as to not attract even more attention to them than what Marshstep already had. "You're only going to get us into more of a mess â€" "

"I don't like those toms staring at me like I'm some meal," Marshstep growled back, lashing her tail. The she-cat did not move from her position, though her eyes did stray from the three toms and instead focus on the pale gray cat watching them closely.

"Do you want us to be punished worse â€" even killed?" Skyblaze demanded. "Because right now, that's what you're provoking!" He pushed his muzzle closer to hers, his eyes like steel as amber met green. "Let it go, Marshstep; at least for right now, while we still have daylight."

Surprisingly, the calico she-cat listened to his words. A growl rumbled deep in her throat as Marshstep rose back to her full height, still glaring daggers at him and the toms. "Whatever," she huffed, sniffing contemptuously, "I'm fine."

Skyblaze knew she was lying, yet didn't bother to push it. Instead, he simply backed away from her and looked in the direction of the set of stones. The pale gray cat was now talking with RiverClan's leader quietly; Scalestar, as Skyblaze recalled. The tortoiseshell's amber gaze was flickering, and Skyblaze took note of her pelt prickled nervously even from his place on the ground.

"Hey, Elder-leg!"

Marshstep stifled a laugh. "Guess they did see you walking out," she murmured, purring in amusement.

Skyblaze flattened his ears as a small group approached them: a black she-cat seemed to be the leader, with a pale gray she-cat, a light

gray tom and one of the white toms that Marshstep had nearly fought trailing behind her. He sighed inwardly but dipped his head in the smallest amount of respect he could muster for the four cats.

"You're coming with us," the black she-cat meowed briskly, twitching her tail-tip. "We've got to check the WindClan border while you hunt."

The light gray tom blinked at the she-cat. "That's not â€" he started, but the white tom cuffed him over the ear.

"He hunts alone," the she-cat repeated, her eyes not moving from Skyblaze's, "or not at all â€" and you know what that means, don't you?"

Skyblaze nodded, his empty stomach knotting.

"Good," she meowed, clearly satisfied in her attempt to frighten him. Her tail-tip hit Skyblaze in the nose as she turned and started for the entrance of the camp. Silently, Skyblaze shared a look with Marshstep before taking up the rear as the group headed out, his tail dragging lazily on the ground.

\* \* \*

><p>Skyblaze hissed in annoyance as another water vole slipped in between his paws. He let out a growl and kicked at the sand below him, causing some of it to go into the water before him and some end up on his fur. <em>Blasted creature!<em> he thought furiously as he wiped at his face with a front paw and stood to shake out his pelt.

"I see someone isn't having much luck!"

The pale gray tom flattened his ears as Salmonstreak, the black she-cat from his patrol, came through a patch of reeds. Her green gaze was mocking as the other three cats stepped out from behind her, snickering and chuckling loudly.

"Even I could do better than that!" Fogpaw, the light gray tom, crowed. "And I've only been an apprentice for three moons!\_"

"Yes, yes," sighed Salmonstreak, rolling her eyes, "we know, Fogpaw. We know.\_"

Fogpaw murmured an apology, to which the black warrior acknowledged with a flick of her tail. She looked at Skyblaze with disdain and clicked her tongue against the roof of her mouth, as if she were thinking. "Hm," she wondered aloud, tipping her head to the side, "What to do with you, I wonder..."

"Keep him out here!" demanded Fogpaw. "He has to catch something!"

The white tom beside Salmonstreak looked down at Skyblaze with an odd glimmer in his eye. "Fogpaw's right," he meowed. "The cat does need to catch at least one bit of prey."

"Scalestar's going to have his tail if he doesn't bring something

back," muttered the pale gray she-cat to Fogpaw's left.

Salmonstreak hummed in agreement with each of their comments, yet didn't bother to voice her opinion on any of them. Instead, she smiled softly at Skyblaze, almost as if to herself. "Come on," she meowed, waving her tail. "Let's get back to camp; it's dusk. Perhaps your friend has caught enough for the two of you to survive Scalestar's wrath."

\* \* \*

><p>Turns out, Marshstep hadn't much luck either. Once they'd returned to camp, Salmonstreak had waltzed up to Mintflower, a pale gray cat who had taken Marshstep on her patrol, and asked what she'd caught. Together, the pair sent Skyblaze and Marshstep to their den without so much as a hint of remorse in their voice.<p>

"I tried!" the calico huffed as she settled down in her nest beside Skyblaze, her green eyes seething with rage. "I really did. But none â€" \_none\_ â€" of those cats take us seriously, so of course they didn't believe me!"

Skyblaze sighed, drawing a pale paw over his face. "Let's just hope their leader doesn't hound us for it," he meowed, earning a murmur of agreement from Marshstep.

Suddenly, the flash of a white pelt was at the corner of Skyblaze's eye. Turning his head, he noticed that Scalestar was pushing her way through their den's entrance â€" or, lack of one â€" with Salmonstreak and Mintflower right at her heels. Skyblaze felt his pulse begin to race under the heat of the RiverClan leader's amber gaze.

"Please excuse my sudden interruption," she started, resting her tail over her paws neatly.

"Excuse my sudden asking of you to leave," Marshstep growled. Skyblaze closed his eyes and ground his teeth, biting back a retort for Marshstep's rudeness, though he felt the same way.

Scalestar ignored the calico's discomfort. "I know that you're new here," she meowed, her eyes digging holes into Skyblaze's skin, "and I know that my warriors haven't been...the kindest of cats â€" and neither have you."

"How can we?" Skyblaze hissed, pinning his ears back, "You're the ones who attacked us!"

"You killed innocent cats," Marshstep added harshly. "Cats that should \_still\_ be here\_."

"You attacked so you could make yourselves look powerful." Skyblaze muttered. "Taking hostages â€" taking \_us\_ â€" was your way of ensuring that fact to yourselves."

Scalestar closed her eyes and sighed before opening them again. "I apologize for what my Clan did to you â€" what all four Clans did to you. Please know that, no matter what my cats may say, do, or think, I am happy that you are here."

Marshstep snorted, "We're not."

"I realize that," Scalestar flashed back. "I never expected any of you to be comfortable wherever you happened to be placed. However, I hope that you find my Clan to be as peaceful as the Tribe once was the longer you stay." She rose to her paws and looked at each of them, her gaze lingering on Skyblaze's for a moment as she whispered, "I know what the Clans did to the Tribe...and while I did agree to help, that does not mean I agreed with taking hostages."

She left without another word.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN:\*\* \*\*Phew! This first chapter is finished!\*\*

\*\*I did not expect it to turn out this long; but long chapters are never bad chapters (usually), so I'm hoping this sticks with me.  
:)\*\*

\*\*Thanks for reading, and if you have the time, please  
review!\*\*

End  
file.